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### **Department Spotlight**

*Thanks to Suzanne Marchand, Dan O'donnell and Finance Staff for all their help with preparation of the 2011 budgets.*

*Thanks to Tina Landry for editing, collating and printing the 2009 annual town report.*

*Thanks to Town Clerk Kaari Tari, Assistant Town Clerk Patty Dubey and Moderator Ellen Harde for Town Meeting preparation and oversight 2010 Annual Town Meeting.*

*Congratulations to the School Department for great MCAS results.*

Watch Meetings Online



www.westfordcat.org

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information.

## **Dear Westford Residents,**

**April 2010**

I would like to begin by thanking our Highway, Fire and Police departments for their outstanding efforts in helping our town during the recent severe rainstorms we experienced. Many of these employees worked around-the-clock to insure that our streets were safe and passable, and our waterways were being monitored and managed as much as possible to prevent street and household flooding. These folks worked tirelessly, in less than ideal conditions – some in water knee-deep and higher. Again, a special thank you to them for all they do for our town.

I would also like to thank the many volunteers of the Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) for their willingness to stand by (on a Friday night, no less) in anticipation of our need to open a shelter for residents on February 26th. This group includes 550 local volunteers, many from Westford. It was determined that we did not need a shelter, however this group willingly gave up their time to stand-by in case the situation changed. This group also staffed the many flu vaccination clinics held by the Health Department through-out the year.

Our Annual Town Meeting was held on March 27th with 638 registered voters in attendance. Just prior to the article approving the Fiscal Year 2011 budget, I presented a State of the Town to the meeting, to provide an overview to residents about our goals, accomplishments, expenditures, revenues, and other matters relevant to the operation of our town. Please see my presentation on the Town Manager's webpage on our website at [www.westfordma.gov](http://www.westfordma.gov), along with the results of Town Meeting's actions - which may be found on our homepage. Thanks to all volunteers, staff, and residents for their enormous efforts in preparing for the meeting, the residents for exercising their civic duty by attending and participating, and the follow-up implementation actions by all. It is wonderful to see democracy at work!

The group of residents who came together after the recent tragic domestic violence incidents has become known as Westford Coalition for Non-Violence. Our vision is "Violence is Unacceptable" and our mission is: "To maintain Westford as a peaceable and safe community built on respect, caring and responsibility for ourselves and each other through ongoing community conversations and activities. The safety and well-being of our community life requires non-violent resolution of conflict. To further this mission, the Westford Coalition for Non-Violence will develop a coordinated community response for the peaceful resolution of conflict through: Education, Resource Identification, Referral Networking, and Direct Assistance Where Appropriate."

We held our first public forum/panel discussion on April 1st with over 85 in attendance. This forum was taped and is being broadcast by WCAT. It will also become available on our website shortly. Thank you to all who have become a part of this incredible community group, who are actively trying to do anything and everything possible to assist those in troublesome domestic situations. Our next event is scheduled for Sunday, April 11th from 4 – 6pm at Westford Academy. More information on this event may be found in the Health Department section of this newsletter, and on our town's website.

The two proposals the town recently received to lease the "Roudenbush" buildings are currently being reviewed by a task force, who has been charged with evaluating the proposals based on the Evaluative Criteria in the RFP. When this task force has completed their work, they will be making a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen for contract award. All review meetings will be posted and open to the public.

Please enjoy this beautiful spring weather – we deserve it!



### **Permitting Department News**

#### **Town Meeting**

Preparations for and participation in the March 27 Annual Town Meeting were a major focus of staff time in March. The Planning Department and the GIS Department worked closely with citizen petitioners who brought forward amendments to the Town's Wireless Communications Facilities bylaw. The amendments, which were approved by unanimous vote of Town Meeting, strengthen the protections in the current bylaw for the siting of new cell tower facilities. All agree that this was a worthwhile interim step leading up to more significant amendments in the future to reflect recent changes in federal law. The Director of Land Use Management will assemble a working group to pursue a thorough evaluation of the cell tower bylaw, with more reform proposals likely in the coming months.

At Town Meeting, several additional "housekeeping" zoning and general bylaw articles prepared by the Building Commissioner were also enacted to ensure consistency with changes to state and federal law.

#### **Permitting and Planning**

The Permitting Department continues to be engaged in a number of current planning initiatives related to project permitting and infrastructure design and finance. Several improvements on Route 110 are at some stage of design or construction, thanks to a combination of local initiatives led by the Engineering and Planning Departments, as well as private development mitigation, and Federal Stimulus funding.

Improvements to Minot's Corner (Boston Road and Littleton Road/Route 110) are programmed for state and federal funding in FY12, and work proceeds in Town Hall on project engineering and financing for design features that aren't eligible for state and federal funding. In April, our offices will host a meeting with business owners on the Route 110 corridor to discuss project design and funding alternatives.

#### **State Recognition for Prior Permitting**

The Town of Westford may soon be recognized in a study underway by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). The EOEEA is highlighting examples of Open Space Residential Design subdivisions that have preserved large percentages of open space, especially land that abuts permanent conservation land. There are several good examples in Westford, and the Director of Land Use Management, Conservation/Resource Planner and GIS Department are assembling "case studies" for seven built subdivisions for submittal to EOEEA later this month.

#### **Long Range Planning**

In April, the Planning Board will discuss the composition and charge of a Comprehensive Master Plan Implementation Committee (CMPIC). Once the Committee structure is determined, citizens will be invited to participate. Stay tuned for future updates in this newsletter and on the Town website.

**Highway Department News**

March certainly was a very busy month for the Highway Department crews. The old saying "in like a lion out like a lamb" described March the best. March brought 3 very heavy rain events into Town. The totals from these rain events set records all over New England for the most rainfall in March ever. Highway Crews worked overtime to keep Westford roads safe and to minimize flooding.

Early in the month the grounds crew led by Jonathan Revis performed a spring cleanup on the new Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. They picked up downed limbs and trees and removed all leaves and pine needles from the Westford stretch.

Hopefully April will be a bit drier so that crews can perform restoration work in association with the wet weather. We are hopeful that the Highway Department will be able to begin their spring-cleaning of all neighborhoods.

The Highway Department wishes everyone a dry and sunny spring.



Highway and Fire Departments Pumping the Nab Dam



### Parks, Recreation, & Cemetery Department News

The department has been selected as one of the 2010 NRPA After School Archery Program (ASAP) grantees. The National Parks and Recreation Association, in partnership with National Alliance for the Development of Archery (NADA) are thrilled that Westford is taking part in a national initiative to increase participation and create sustainable programming for youth in the community. The grant for \$500 will help the department grow and enhance existing programs.

The spring and summer program brochure has been mailed to all residents. Program registration information is on line at [www.westfordrec.com](http://www.westfordrec.com)

### Town Engineer Visits Fourth Grade Class

Ruth Freeman, fourth grade teacher at the Abbot School, recently invited Paul Starratt, Town Engineer, to speak to her class about designing buildings to withstand earthquakes. Ms Freeman's class was really moved by the tragedies in Haiti and Chile and wanted to learn more about building materials and the lack of building codes that may have led to the monumental devastation caused by the natural disaster. The fourth grade class was working on a project for the Inventor's Fair that involved building small-scale models and testing them on a quake table.

Mr. Starratt explained to the class that earthquakes produce a horizontal force that impacts a structure much like a strong wind. The class learned that reinforcing can be added to a structure to account for earthquake forces, but this requires additional engineering work and building materials that increases the cost of construction. Unlike Chile, the economy in Haiti could not support the additional costs of earthquake design and construction, so the destruction of life and property was much greater in Haiti compared to the more affluent country of Chile. Mr. Starratt reported to the class that the United Nations was working with the Haitian government to require earthquake building codes for any construction projects funded by donor nations.

The Engineering Department was very encouraged by the fourth graders and their personal interest in preventing future tragedies. The students asked some challenging and well thought out questions that left the Town Engineer wondering how many boys and girls in Ms Freeman's class would pursue a career in civil engineering.







**Health Department News**

***Westford Coalition for Non-Violence***  
cordially invites you to a community forum:

**Keys to Prevention and Interventions  
for Domestic Violence**

**Date:** Sunday, April 11, 2010  
**Time** Networking and light refreshments - 3:30 PM- 4:00 PM  
Program- 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
**Location:** Westford Academy Auditorium.

Detailed information on primary prevention strategies, interventions and protective orders / safety plans will be shared. The presenters will provide specific ideas about establishing a comprehensive community plan to reduce domestic violence in Westford. A question and answer period will follow the presentations. This program will expand on information previously provided at the first community domestic violence forum held on April 1st.

**Speakers:**

**Jacquelin Apsler:** Executive Director of the Domestic Violence Services Network  
**Sheridan Haines:** Executive Director of Governor Patrick's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence  
**Carlene Pavlos:** Director Division of Violence and Injury Prevention, Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
**Joanne Tulonen:** Director at Battered Women's Resources  
**William Luppold:** Detective. Sgt., Westford Police Department

For further information please contact Sandy Collins R.N., Health Department, 978-692-5509, [scollins@westfordma.gov](mailto:scollins@westfordma.gov) or Jodi Ross, Town Manager, 978-692-5501, [jross@westfordma.gov](mailto:jross@westfordma.gov).

**Westford is a Peaceable Community**

**Health Department News****Shingles Clinic**

We have requested and received an additional limited supply of shingles vaccine from Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and will be holding another **FREE** clinic for Westford residents. The clinic will be for seniors 60 and over who are uninsured or underinsured (insurance policy does not cover shingles vaccine). This vaccine is available for residents whether or not they have had a history of shingles or chicken pox in the past. Additional screening will be done at time of registration. Appointments are required. Please call the Health Department @ 978 692-5509 or the Program Registration Line @ 978 692-5525 by April 19th.

**Date:** 4/28  
**Time:** 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. By appointment only!  
**Location:** Millennium School  
**Fee:** FREE

